

Academic Professional Leadership Program Class of 2019

Urbana-Champaign



Anita Balgopal, Ph.D. joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2012 as Director of the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects, a research compliance unit within the OVCR. She has over 20 years of experience in the area of research administration in academic settings. Prior to coming to the Urbana campus, Anita was at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago. She holds degrees in health administration, social work, and higher education administration. Anita's personal research interests are in the areas of facilitating ethical research at institutions of higher education and advocacy for special needs children and their families.

Anita enjoys working with high impact teams and believes engaged teams yield positive results. Under Anita's leadership, UIUC achieved re-accreditation of their human subjects protection program; participated in a not-for-cause audit by the FDA that yielded minimal findings; and in 2017, designed and planned the inaugural human subjects research conference on campus. Anita was selected by the OVCR to be part of the Emerging Women's Leadership program. She aims to leverage existing programs to achieve the strategic goals and shared vision of our campuses. Anita managed the response to the university audit of compensating human subjects, which involved many stakeholders and units across campus and resulted in several system-wide policy changes. Over the past six years, she and her team have handled increasing volumes of protocols and have concurrently reduced review times. Anita and her team are committed to facilitating research and partnering with researchers.



Dr. Brian Brauer is the Associate Director for Infrastructure and Special Projects at the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) where he is responsible for all facilities, props, and vehicles at the Illinois State Fire Academy. He joined the IFSI Field Staff in 1998 and has worked there full-time since 2000. He has volunteered as a fire department officer and EMT since 1990. He is passionate about improving training, education, certification, and research in the fire and emergency services to have a safer, better informed, and better-defined profession.

Brian is engaged with the Pro Board® Fire Service Professional Qualifications System as the Chairman of the Committee on Accreditation and sits on the Board of Directors. He is active with the North American Fire Training Directors and led the research for the organization's strategic planning. He is also a Registered Nurse and is the EMS Coordinator for the 51,580-person UIUC campus. Brian is also active with the National Fire Protection Association and serves on several committees that create national standards for firefighter training, education, and certification.

Brian earned a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a Master's in Global Human Resource Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Doctorate in Education in Educational Policy and Organizational Leadership. His dissertation, a study of cultural change following a firefighter fatality, was recognized by the University Council on Workforce and Human Resource Education as the 2017 Outstanding Dissertation.



Dr. Kim Collins has been at Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) at the University of Illinois for the past 19 years as a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and now serves as Associate Director. She has expanded services at Illinois to include more intensive supports such as academic screenings, neuropsychological evaluations, executive skills coaching, individual therapy, group therapy, and transition programs for students with ADHD, acquired brain injury, autism spectrum disorders, and psychological disabilities so that they can succeed at the post-secondary level. Dr. Collins is an adjunct faculty in the Educational Psychology department and is involved in training counseling, clinical, and school psychology graduate students and predoctoral interns to work effectively with people with disabilities. She has made over 100 presentations at

international, national, and regional professional conferences on topics of providing supports for college students with disabilities, including being an invited speaker at NAMI, USPRA, and the First Annual Depression on College Campuses Conference at the University of Michigan to discuss the innovative programs she has developed.



Jenny Ehrnthaller is the Associate Director of Operations for the Department of Bioengineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She earned a dual bachelor's degree in Molecular and Integrative Physiology and in Chemistry and an M.B.A. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Jenny works strategically with the Head of the Department of Bioengineering in implementing the mission of the department, managing operations, and advancing the student experience. She was the lead departmental contact for the recent Everitt Laboratory Renovation project (new home of the Department of Bioengineering), directing and providing oversight on the project, and played a key administrative role in the advancement and integration of the new Carle Illinois College of Medicine with the Department of Bioengineering. Jenny

also recently served as a district representative and executive committee member for the University Council of Academic Professionals, currently serves as the AP representative for the Senate Committee on Campus Operations, and will chair the Chancellor's Academic Professional Excellence (CAPE) Award Committee this year.



Brian Farber has worked for Illinois at the Urbana campus since the fall of 2005. He is the Executive Assistant to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs/Director of Auxiliaries. In this role, he assists in the oversight of auxiliary units including University Housing, Campus Recreation, Illini Union, McKinley Health Center, State Farm Center, and Parking Department. Brian provides leadership in the student fee process, campus master planning, contract negotiations, exploration of public private partnership opportunities, and various other committees and work groups to improve our service to students. Previously, Brian served Illinois as the director of the Office for Student Conflict Resolution where he was responsible for the

student disciplinary and academic integrity processes, Title IX response, behavioral intervention and threat assessment processes, and bias incident investigations.

Prior to coming to Illinois, Brian worked as an Assistant Dean of Students and Residence Hall Director at Ball State University. He earned his both his bachelor's (psychology) and master's (counseling psychology) degrees from Illinois State University. He was recently elected to the Academic Senate as the Council of Academic Professionals representative, is a regular volunteer and presenter with the Illinois Leadership Center, and serves as a mentor to students on campus and in the Urbana public schools. When not at work, Brian is busy camping and travelling with his wife and two young daughters.



Dr. Jeffrey Stein is an Assistant Research Scientist at the Illinois Natural History Survey where he leads the Sport Fish Ecology Lab studying the basic and applied ecology of freshwater and marine fishes, seeking to understand linkages between ecological function and exploitation of populations by humans. Specifically, Dr. Stein's Sport Fish Ecology Lab studies the biological underpinnings of capture vulnerability to fishing and the evolutionary consequences of recreational fishing on the life history, behavior and physiology of Largemouth Bass. Additionally, his team studies the recovery of native Lake Trout in southern Lake Michigan, the growing popularity of recreational fishing targeting gars and Bowfin, and the spatial ecology of Bonefish in the Caribbean.

Dr. Stein begins his second year as one of five inaugural Prairie Research Institute Fellows, where he is currently leading an internal assessment of the Institute and is a contributor to the development of PRI's next strategic plan. Dr. Stein recently completed a two-year term as Chair of the Council of Academic Professionals and member of the Senate Executive Committee, will continue to represent PRI as a member of the Council, and will serve on the University Statutes and Senate Procedures Committee in the Faculty Senate in 2018-19.

Dr. Stein was born and raised in the Chicago suburbs, and received his B.S. (1993), M.S. (2004), and Ph.D. (2013) from University of Illinois, where he also serves as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in NRES. Dr. Stein and his wife Kim live in Champaign, who together have four children.



David B. Wilcoxon is a three-time graduate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In 1989, he obtained a Bachelor of Arts in physical geography and received the University of Illinois Bronze Tablet award. He also became a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1992, he obtained a Masters of Urban Planning with a focus on environmental planning and policy. After obtaining his MUP, he worked as a Fellow with the U.S. Army Environmental Policy Institute until 1995. While at the Institute, he developed environmental program planning and policy recommendations for the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment. He also developed public participation policy guidance for the Army's environmental decision-making and planning process with the assistance of community and grassroots organizations. Mr. Wilcoxon subsequently

took his current position with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1995 where he co-established the Environmental Compliance Department. His primary responsibility at the University is to coordinate the creation and implementation of environmental compliance programs that satisfy all federal, state and local environmental requirements.

While performing these duties, he enrolled in the University of Illinois College of Law in 1997 and received a Juris Doctor degree in May 2000. Mr. Wilcoxon was admitted to the Illinois Bar the fall of 2000 and served as a member of the ISBA Environmental Law Section Council from 2001-08.

Chicago



Stephanie Estrada is the Senior Associate Director of the Office of Institutional Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She oversees the team that is responsible for creating and maintaining student data files, systems, and reporting tools to meet official data requirements of OIR and producing federal and state level institutional reports such as IPEDS and IBHE and other requests for official data. Prior to joining UIC in 2013, Stephanie worked as an independent data consultant, a researcher at the University of Chicago, and a senior business consultant in health insurance, technology, and customer service industries.

She earned her M.S. in Public Administration from DePaul University and B.A. in Business from Truman State University.



Agnes Herget is an Assistant Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has been in the Dean's office for seven of her fifteen years at UIC. Prior to her current role, Agnes served as the Assistant Director in the School of Literatures, Cultural Studies, and Linguistics, as a program coordinator in the Department of Germanic Studies, and as an Academic Advisor in the Study Abroad Office.

In her current position, as part of the Dean's leadership team, Agnes has been contributing to the strategic planning and decision-making for the College and has gained critical experiences in all aspects of College administration, ranging from faculty affairs and the budgetary process to hiring, faculty research, advancement, and student academic affairs. She currently leads the College's new "Online Pathways" initiative, which consists of a suite of General Education courses that are offered 100% online in collaboration with UIC's Extended Campus. Recently, Agnes has been heading the College's effort to merge and reorganize the Math and Science Learning Centers, putting in place structures that will increase the new Center's impact on the success of UIC students by providing tailored, effective academic support services to those students who are most at risk.

A native of Germany, Agnes holds an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and Cultural Studies specializing in English and Russian. Her studies allowed her to spend one year at Southern Illinois University and a period of time in St. Petersburg, Russia, and the Ukraine.



Dr. Aginah M. Muhammad is the Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education. In this role, Dr. Muhammad is responsible for providing campus-wide leadership for over 20 programs leading to professional licensure of educators. Dr. Muhammad works collaboratively with the deans of the College of Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Art, Architecture and Design, the College of Nursing and the Jane Addams College of Social Work to ensure state and federal program compliance. In addition to Aginah's administrative responsibilities, she is an elected member of the Executive Board for the Illinois Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; Institutional Representative for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and the Council of Chicago Area Deans of Education. She also serves on several institutional

committees such as the Student Success Initiative: Improving African American Student Success at UIC, African American Recruitment, Enrollment and Retention Initiative, Student Conduct Committee, and the Council on Teacher Education Executive Committee at UIC. Prior to her current appointment, Dr. Muhammad served as the Director of the Office of First-Year Initiatives, Assistant Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, and Undergraduate Program Development Specialist at UIC; taught courses as an adjunct professor at several Chicago area higher education institutions and held several senior administration positions within Chicago Public Schools.

Dr. Muhammad earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, Master of Education Leadership and Administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago and Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Leadership from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology.



Colleen Piersen, PhD, MBA currently serves as Assistant Head for Administration and Research Assistant Professor of Pharmacognosy in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Pharmacognosy in the College of Pharmacy at UIC. She also serves in the role of Director of Research Services for the College of Pharmacy. Dr. Piersen has over twenty years of experience as a researcher, faculty member, or academic professional at four major research universities and one biotechnology company. Her biomedical background is broad having conducted and/or managed basic through translational research in the fields of G-protein coupled receptors, DNA repair, reproductive health, and botanical dietary supplements. Much of her research activity has

focused on women's health. Colleen currently serves as the principal staff administrator in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Pharmacognosy, and while she specializes in sponsored research administration, her responsibilities span sponsored research, finance, space planning, human resources, and graduate program management. She has provided key administrative support for the establishment and operation of two Board of Trustees-approved centers: the UIC/NIH Center for Botanical Dietary Supplements Research (1999 – present) and the UICentre for Drug Discovery at UIC (2012 – present).

Dr. Piersen served in the role of Chair of the UIC Academic Professional Advisory Committee (APAC) from 2015-2017 and has been a member of the UI Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (UPPAC) since 2015.

Dr. Piersen holds a BA in Chemistry from Carleton College, a Ph.D. in Pharmacology from Vanderbilt University, and an M.B.A. in Healthcare Administration from Alaska Pacific University.



Benjamin E. Ramirez, Ph.D. is a native of the Chicago area from a large family whose parents immigrated from Mexico to the USA in 1952. He attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for undergraduate studies majoring in Chemistry (B.S. 1992). He went on to obtain a doctorate degree in Chemistry at Caltech in 1997. Afterwards, he pursued postdoctoral training at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, MD. After a brief stint as core facility manager in the Department of Chemistry at Northwestern University, in 2004, Ben moved to UIC as Director of the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Facility in the newly constructed Center for Structural Biology. Ben continues in this position within the department of the Research Resources Center (RRC) under the OVCR at UIC, overseeing instrumentation, which is and has been for 14 years, unique in the State of Illinois. In this role, he has supported

researchers at UIC directly by acquiring experimental data and by providing training of and assistance

for graduate students and postdocs to operate the instruments. These instruments are utilized for research in the fields of biochemistry, chemistry, materials and pharmaceutical sciences. Ben is also a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics/COM and has been a member of the Academic Professional Advisory Committee (APAC) at UIC since 2012.

Ben is married and has two young daughters. When time permits, Ben prefers outdoors activities such as hiking or biking but also enjoys history, architecture, traveling, reading paperback books, and experimenting in the kitchen.



David Taeyaerts is the Associate Vice Chancellor of Learning Environments & Campus Architect at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has over 25 years of diverse experience in professional practice, teaching and higher education administration. Dave is a licensed architect, engineer, and a LEED accredited professional. He is skilled in higher education facility and space programming, planning, design, assessment, master planning, capital planning, project management and project leadership. Dave is a member of the Facilities Planning Academy of the Society for College and University Planning and on the Board of Advisers for the Learning Space Collaboratory Roundtables.



Blending an academic background in public health and a passion for communication, **Michael Wesbecher** is currently the Director of Communications & Events with the UIC Office of the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs (OVCHA). In this role, he serves as the communication strategy liaison for the health science colleges and units across the University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System (UI Health). Working collaboratively with communicators across disciplines to bring alignment and consistency to messaging and university identity is his top priority. Prior to starting in this role with the OVCHA, he held several positions with increasing responsibility in the University of Illinois College of Medicine, most recently as the Senior Director of Engagement.

Throughout the course of his 10-year career at UIC, he has ignited a passion for health communication and continues to challenge and lead communication efforts for UI Health. He received his master degree in public health from the UIC School of Public Health and bachelors in communication from Wittenberg University. As a consummate storyteller, he aims to frame a narrative for UI Health and UIC that highlights the expertise of campus faculty and clinicians, the commitment of health science students, the innovative spirit of researchers and the impact these have on the health and lives of those in our communities locally and across the world.

A native of Ohio, he currently lives on the north side of Chicago with his wife, Sarah, and one-year-old daughter, Lilly. He finds enjoyment and relaxation in cooking meals for family and friends, biking along the lakefront, playing tennis, reading and traveling.

Springfield



Michele Gribbins is an e-Learning Specialist with the Center for Online Learning, Research & Service (COLRS) at UIS. She provides direct consultation, development training, and support to faculty to enhance their instruction in online and blended courses. She also coordinates and supports the COLRS Faculty Research Fellows Program and the Open Education Resources Fellows Program. Additionally, she designs, develops, and analyzes data reports related to online enrollments, admissions, and applications to guide COLRS when consulting and advising across campus.

Michele advances research through presentation and publication on a variety of online learning topics including pedagogy, best practices, and emerging technologies. She has co-authored five journal articles, two book chapters, and has delivered more than forty presentations at international, national, and regional conferences. She serves as the Vice Chair for the Online Administration Network of the University Professional & Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), and serves on the Conference Planning Committee for the UPCEA Central Region. She is also the treasurer of the Illinois Council on Continuing Higher Education.

Prior to joining COLRS, she taught in the Management Information Systems department at UIS, where she continues to teach as an adjunct instructor. She has a B.S. in Finance from Illinois State University, an M.B.A. from Eastern Illinois University, and completed doctoral coursework in Business Administration (Information Systems Concentration) from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is pursuing an Ed.D. in Instructional Systems Technology from Indiana University-Bloomington.



James Koepp is the Director of Campus Recreation at the University of Illinois Springfield. He served as the Acting Dean of Students in 2015. Prior to his arrival at UIS in 2014, James was at Georgetown College (KY) for 17 years where he served as the Associate Dean of Students. Additionally, James worked as a Resident Director and oversaw recreation on Semester at Sea on the 2001 Spring Voyage, which visited ten countries and served over 600 students. James has a Master's Degree in Student Personnel Services from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Georgetown College.

Through Leadership Springfield, James helped develop 100+ Who Care in Springfield and now serves on the board. 100+ Who Care in Springfield is a non-profit group that hosts an annual event that brings together about 100 people in 100 minutes to

raise \$10,000 for a local charity. He also enjoys volunteering with his son's Cub Scout pack where he serves at the Pinewood Derby chair.

James has two children, Maya (13) and Sean (10). His wife, Dr. Gretchen Lohman is the Senior Associate for Academic Affairs at the Illinois Board of Higher Education. He enjoys traveling with his family and his passion lies in outdoor recreation.



Lisa Whelpley is the Director of Annual Giving/Major Gift Development at University of Illinois Springfield. She earned an M.S. degree in Leisure Studies from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, focusing on festival and special event tourism and leisure choices during courtship. She earned a B.S. in Athletic Training and a BA in Sociology from Miami University. Before starting at UIS in 2001, Lisa worked for seven years in nonprofit fundraising at the Central Illinois Foodbank and the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

Lisa's areas of expertise include fundraising, identifying gaps, building consensus, implementing solutions, and analyzing results. At UIS, Lisa develops, implements and analyzes annual giving and communication plans that include in-person visits as, well as over 350 mail, telemarketing, and email campaigns per year. She coordinates the gift acknowledgement process at UIS, maintains a portfolio of major donor prospects, and manages UIS' very successful Faculty and Staff Campaign each year.

Outside of her work at the university, Lisa is the email and website manager and calendar editor for SpringfieldMoms.org, and she serves as president of Glenwood Choral Boosters, a group of parents that supports the nationally acclaimed Titan Fever show choir. Lisa lives in Chatham with her husband and son.

System Offices



Brenda Hixson, Interim Director for Business Solutions and Support (BSS), currently serves as the BSS department head. BSS provides project management and information technology services to the Office of Business and Financial Services (OBFS) for University of Illinois units and employees at the three universities. BSS services include Project Management, Organizational Effectiveness, Instructional Design, Change Management (Communications, Training & Policy), Shared Services and Business Process Analysis and Improvement.

Brenda has over 20 years of public and private sector experience with progressive roles in the strategic and operational areas of Information Technology. Brenda began her career with the University of Illinois in 2007 and prior to that managed large IT operations in the health insurance industry. Brenda holds a

bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Franklin University and a Master of Science degree in Management Information Systems from the University of Illinois at Springfield. Brenda is a member of the Project Management Institute (PMI) and holds a certification in Project Management. Brenda is continuing her education in Human Resources at UIS. Most recently, Brenda received the Distinguished Employee Leadership and Team Award (DELTA) for the implementation of call center for University Payroll and Benefits department.



Joe Shroyer is the Associate Director of Customer Service and Cashier Operations in University Student Financial Services and Cashier Operations (USFSCO) at the University of Illinois. During 12 plus years in USFSCO, Joe has provided quality service to the university community and developed innovative strategies to help students succeed financially at the University of Illinois.

Under Joe's leadership, USFSCO was awarded the University of Illinois Distinguished Employee and Leadership Award (DELTA), which recognizes exceptional accomplishment, service and dedication to the University. Joe's team was recognized for highly successful initiatives to improve outreach and satisfaction of students and their families, with particular focus on newly admitted students.

One of Joe's significant contributions was taking the lead in implementing a flexible, easy to enroll payment plan with multiple options for University of Illinois students. Very well received upon launch, the plan continues to be a popular payment option. Enrollment has grown from just under 5,000 enrollees in academic year 2008-09 to more than 12,000 in academic year 2017-18.

Joe received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Master of Education from the University of Illinois. He is a member of the Big Ten Bursars Association and the Illinois Bursar Organization. Joe's wife, Erica Shroyer, is a Nurse Practitioner at Carle Foundation Hospital. Joe and Erica have one daughter, Charlotte and a German shorthaired pointer, Zoey. The Shroyers enjoy staying active. Erica is an avid runner, Joe is a consistent member of the YMCA, and family walks are a favorite activity.



Kathy Sullivan is the program coordinator at the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs. In this role, she is responsible for the public engagement profile of the institute. She directs programs such as the Paul H. Douglas Award for Ethics in Government, the New Leadership Illinois Program and the Conference for New Members of the Illinois General Assembly. Before coming to the University, she worked 5 years for then Senator Barack Obama in his downstate senate and campaign offices. She has a

bachelor's degree from Millikin University and an MPA from the University of Illinois Springfield.